

columnists are rarely taken to task for their lack of balance. But when they are, the letter writers usually point out the lack of balance by listing ideas that tend to emphasize their opposing obligation to a particular philosophy without personal abuse.

It's a narrow advocacy, somewhat like what happens in a court of law, where it is hoped that, in the end given the two extremes in argument, the truth will somehow take form in the mind of the judge or the jury.

Then you have Roy Meachum, a columnist who is not so interested in fulfilling an obligation to a particular philosophy or scoring points. He would rather look at all sides of a problem as a judge or jury would. The purpose of his writing is not persuasion, but to arrive at or communicate the truth.

It is as though he is sitting back with us, interested but unemotional, and looking at the problems that surround us in an effort to make them clear and understandable. It is also apparent by his writing that he has thought long and hard about the problems of racism, prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination in all their subtleties (Perhaps because these are the very enemies of what he holds so dear — truth.) and he doesn't hesitate to identify them wherever they may be, even if such thinking isn't in season.

### 'They score points for their side'

Many of the columnists of your paper are people who are not so interested in the truth so much as they are in fulfilling a personal obligation to a particular philosophy. Their writing is frequently slanted and unbalanced, but popular. Their purpose when writing is persuasion. They want to score points for their side.

In letters to your editorial page these

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torically have every reason in the world to support Mr. Meachum's purpose and method of writing.

Such bigotry is extraordinarily flagrant and gives one cause to question any belief in the essential goodness of people. We now need to begin teaching some of the people who belong to groups that have been so remarkably injured in the past by illiberal attitudes about people, the value of tolerance when considering the Russians, the white South Africans, and the Palestinians. Does it never end?

RON HEFLIN  
Walkersville

So, for Mr. Meachum, popularly villainous people like the Russians, the white South Africans and the Palestinians aren't animals but rather human beings that are part of problems that need to be understood.

Sadly, however, in letters to your editorial page he has been vigorously attacked with abusive ad hominem arguments by some of the very people who are members of groups that his-